



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A PEOPLE STRATEGY AND A COLLEGE'S PURSUIT OF BEST IN CLASS

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ABSTRACT

Any strategic plan is intended to chart new ways of thinking and practice in an organization. Due to the rapidly changing environment that is loaded with a lot of ambiguity, post secondary educational institutions have shied away from long term commitment like 10 year plans and have instead shepherded a new era of short workable plans. In doing so, they have paid great attention to all the stakeholders comments. Their participation in the process of shaping the future has been critical in positioning the College for success in the upcoming three years. Aligning their collective voice and incorporating their inputs the institution has been able to pivot and align its objectives with the Colleges mission, vision and strategic objectives. Getting the right talent and people will help to achieve the desired outcomes.

KEY WORDS: strategy, employee, skills- sets, attraction, retention, process.

INTRODUCTION:

"An organization, no matter how well designed, is only as good as the people who live and work in it" (Hock, 2009)

Post secondary education is at a crossroads. All Institutions are changing at a greater pace than previously imagined. This pressure has really demonstrated itself by placing pressure on its workforce. The workforce must be flexible, resilient and able to deal with the uncertainty in the external environment. Being successful in such a complex and demanding environment is contingent on the leadership, skill and competency of the College's workforce. George Brown college has prided itself in the past with a good reputation, strong culture and effective union-employer relationship. It has a strong brand to which potential employees are drawn. Therefore it has become imperative that we develop a strategic plan that wraps around the human resource power and talent. This will be a plan that will strengthen the College and create an environment where people are committed to work and furthering its goals and aspirations.

The Vision:

"Train people well enough so they can leave, treat them well enough so they don't want to" (Branson, 2018).

It is the College's goal to be recognized as one of the best employers in the post secondary education sector in Canada. It is our belief that intuitively if we receive this recognition, then we will be competitive in the marketplace for not only attracting talent but also retaining talent. As outlined in the Human resource published a document stating, "we aim to be considered as the organization that provides a challenging, healthy and rewarding work environment where staff have the ability to learn and grow and build a rewarding and fulfilling career" (GBC Press, 2019). In order to fulfill the vision the College has articulated a number of key priorities.

The Priorities:

"Clients do not come first. If you take care of your employees, they will take care of the clients". (Branson, 2019).

1. Attraction, motivation and retention of the right employees with the right skillsets: Recruiting and retaining top talent will always be top of mind in the overall human resource strategy. A very refined recruitment strategy with a dynamic and flexible retention plan.
2. Creating and ensuring a healthy workplace: The health and safety of all employees and students at the College is considered job one. This commitment is more than being legislatively compliant, it should be best in practice. The concept of work life balance needs to be more than lip service but rather a demonstrable tangible commitment.
3. Providing opportunities for growth and development: Post secondary educational institutions need to be truly learning organizations. Creating rosters of educational course offerings, seminars and learning moments for all is imperative. Fundamental principles of leadership and team exercises should be pervasive in all the offerings. Concept of self development and growth needs to be culturally embraced.
4. Building interprofessional teams and respectful behaviors honoring diver-

sity: The support of diversity and human rights should be an underlying thread that weaves through all that we do and offer. Training, ongoing educational events and the review of the organizational culture of systemic barriers with a proactive plan to remove must be created and implemented.

5. Rewarding excellent performance: The College will be investing in leadership development, performance management, corporate learning to ensure staff have full understanding of job accountabilities. Key periods of regular and consistent feedback will be pivotal to changing behavior.
6. Improving Processes and measuring impacts: We have begun to identify metrics and benchmarks so that measurement can take place. Service excellence will require the College to greater utilize technology and provide just in time corrections. The surveillance and analytics through technology will allow us to change and adapt to the ever- changing external environment.

CONCLUSION:

All organizations and agencies are struggling today with the attraction and retention of talent. The race for talent acquisition is much more complex due to the recent Covid virus epidemic. Institutions can no longer rest on their historical laurels. Just like the virus, organizations will recombine and flex to its new workforce. Different generational employees place stock on different perks. Having said that, a workplace that is seen as fair, professional and modern thinking will prevail. Just like the old adage taken from the famous movie, Field of Dreams "If you build it, they will come" (Kinsella 1982). If the post secondary education sector listens to the new cohorts of employees and incorporate their suggestions and needs the future will be quite bright. Only time will tell.

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